GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:988
ANSWERED ON:24.02.2003
LINKING OF RIVERS
DR. KIRIT SOMAIYA;RAJO SINGH;RAM SHAKAL;V. VETRISELVAN

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Task Force appointed by the Government to study the feasibility of linking the rivers has started functioning;

(b) if so, the terms and conditions thereof;

(c) whether the Supreme Court observation are being taken into account;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any interim report by the task force has been submitted to the Union Government;

(f) if so, the details thereof;

(g) whether the Planning Commission has made some negative recommendations on the implementation of the project; and

(h) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SMT. BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY)

(a) & (b): A Task Force on Inter-linking of rivers under the Chairmanship of Shri Suresh P. Prabhu, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha was constituted on 13.12.2002. Shri C.C.Patel and Dr.C.D. Thatte, both Retd. Secretariesof the Ministry of Water Resources are Vice-Chairman and Member-Secretaryof the Task Force respectively. Besides, the Task Force shall comprise of other Members (i)from water deficit States , (ii) from water surplus States, (iii) an economist, (iv) a sociologist and (v) a legal/world wildlife expert.

The terms of reference of the Task Force are as under:

i) Provide guidance on norms of appraisal of individual projects in respect of economic viability, socio-economic impacts, environmental impacts and preparation of resettlement plans;

ii) Devise suitable mechanism for bringing about speedy consensus amongst the States;

iii) Prioritize the different project components for preparation of Detailed Project Reports and implementation;

iv) Propose suitable organizational structure for implementing the project;

v) Consider various modalities for project funding; and

vi) Consider international dimensions that may be involved in some project components.

The Task Force has held its first meeting on 6.1.2003.

(c) & (d): The Supreme Court in its Orderdated 31st October, 2002 in the Writ Petition No.512of 2002 has observed that "we do expect that the programme when drawn up would try and ensure that the link projects are completed within a reasonable time of not more than ten years." As per the Milestones prepared by Government on inter-linking of rivers, feasibility studies on the Links and Detailed Project Reports are scheduled forcompletion by 31.12.2005 and 31.12.2006 respectively. The project is scheduled for completion by the end of the year 2016.

(e) & (g): No, Sir.

(f) & (h): Do not arise